

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims to read as follows.

1-34. (Canceled)

35. (New) An animal feed composition comprising, in admixture, at least 1%, by weight, of a carotenoid and at least 5%, by weight, of a phospholipid that is liquid at the body temperature of the animal.

36. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the ratio of the carotenoid : the phospholipid is from 1:100 to 100:1.

37. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the ratio of the carotenoid : the phospholipid is from 1:10 to 1:1.

38. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the carotenoid is obtained from a microbial source.

39. (New) The composition of claim 38, wherein the source is an organism selected from the group consisting of Phaffia, Haematococcus, Schizochytrium, and Paracoccus species.

40. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the carotenoid is selected from the group consisting of astaxanthin, zeaxanthin, canthaxanthin, lutein, beta-carotene, and lycopene.

41. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the carotenoid is a synthetic carotenoid.

42. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein at least 20% of the fatty acid residues of the phospholipid are polyunsaturated.

43. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein at least 10% of the fatty acid residues of the phospholipid have three or more double bonds.

44. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein at least 10% of the fatty acid residues of the phospholipid have four or more double bonds.

45. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein at least 20% of the fatty acid residues of the phospholipid have four or more double bonds.
46. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the phospholipid is obtained from a microbial source.
47. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the phospholipid is an egg lecithin.
48. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the phospholipid is obtained from a source selected from the group consisting of fish, crustaceans, and shellfish.
49. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the phospholipid is obtained from a mammal.
50. (New) The composition of claim 49, wherein the phospholipid is obtained from a mammalian brain.
51. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the animal is an aquatic animal.
52. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the animal is a fish.
53. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the animal is a crustacean.
54. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the animal is a terrestrial animal.
55. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the animal is a bird.
56. (New) The composition of claim 35, wherein the body temperature is less than 20°C.
57. (New) A method of pigmenting an animal or an animal-derived product, the method comprising feeding to the animal a composition comprising, in admixture, at least 1%, by weight, of a carotenoid and at least 5%, by weight, of a phospholipid that is liquid at the body temperature of the animal, whereby the animal or product becomes pigmented.
58. (New) The method of claim 57, wherein the item that is pigmented is selected from the group consisting of an egg and a processed egg product.

59. (New) The method of claim 57, wherein the item that is pigmented is selected from the group consisting of a whole animal, the processed flesh of an animal, and a processed animal product.

60. (New) A method of preparing an animal feed composition, the method comprising
(a) mixing a carotenoid and a phospholipid that is liquid at the body temperature of the animal to form a mixture; and
(b) thereafter combining the mixture with at least one other animal feed component, such that the carotenoid makes up at least 1%, by weight, of the composition and the phospholipid makes up at least 5%, by weight, of the composition.

61. (New) The method of claim 60, wherein the mixture is incorporated into a pelleted feed composition.

62. (New) The method of claim 60, wherein the mixture is used to coat a pelleted feed composition.

63. (New) The method of claim 60, wherein the mixture is incorporated into an oil used to coat a pelleted feed composition.

64. (New) The method of claim 60, wherein multiple carotenoids are incorporated into the mixture, the combined carotenoids make up at least 1%, by weight, of the composition.